

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NICOSI 01535 100557Z

14

ACTION NEA-12

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C O N F I D E N T I A L NICOSIA 1535

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT SOCI CY

SUBJECT: SYNOD OF ORTHODOX PATRIARCHATES SUPPORTS MAKARIOS

SUMMARY: MAJOR SYNOD DECLARES REBEL BISHOPS DEFROCKING OF
MAKARIOS NULL AND VOID. PATRIARCH NICHOLAS OF ALEXANDRIA
THREATENS EXCOMMUNICATE THEM IF THEY PERSIST IN OPPOSING ARCH-
BISHIP. BISHOPS REFUSE RECEIVE SYNOD'S DECISION AND LIKELY
BOYCOTT JULY 9 SESSION, TO WHICH THEY HAVE BEEN SUMMONED.
END SUMMARY.

1. MAJOR SYNOD CALLED BY MAKARIOS TO TRY THREE CYPRUS BISHOPS
ON CHARGES OF "SCHISM AND CONVENTICLE" CONVENED JULY 5. WITH
UNCHARACTERISTIC HASTE, ON JULY 6 PRELATES UNANIMOUSLY
DECIDED THAT THREE BISHOPS DECISION DEFROCK MAKARIOS WAS CONTRARY
TO CANON LAW AND THEREFORE NULL AND VOID. REBEL BISHOPS HAVE BEEN
INVITED ATTEND JULY 9 SYNODICAL SESSION, BUT IT MOST UNLIKELY THEY
WILL TAKE PART. SPEAKING IN NICOSIA CHURCH JULY 8,
PATRIARCH NICHOLAS OF ALEXANDRIA THREATENED IMPOSE
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PAGE 02 NICOSI 01535 100557Z

"ANATHEMA" (HEAVIEST ECCLESIASTICAL PUNISHMENT--MEANING

FULL ALIENATION FROM CHURCH) IF BISHOPS MAINTAIN THEIR PRESENT ATTITUDE TOWARDS MAKARIOS. (INTERESTINGLY, THIS THREAT WAS DROPPED FROM OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT, INDICATING THAT NICHOLAS MAY HAVE BEEN SPEAKING PERSONALLY RATHER THAN AS SYNODS REPRESENTATIVE.)

2. SYNOD COMPRISES 16 PRELATES FROM PATRIARCHATES OF ALEXANDRIA ANTIOCH AND JERUSALEM, PLUS MAKARIOS AND HIS BISHOP SUFFRAGAN. PATRIARCH OF ANTIOCH IS PARTICIPATING IN PERSON, IN ADDITION PATRIARCH OF ALEXANDRIA, WHO IS PRESIDING. PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM REPORTEDLY WAS NOT WELL ENOUGH TO ATTEND.

3. ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE AND CHURCH OF GREECE ARE NOT PARTICIPATING IN MAJOR SYNOD. ACCORDING GREEK EMB, QUESTION OF GREEK CHURCH ATTENDANCE HAS BEEN ON GREEK HOLY SYNODS AGENDA, BUT WILL NOT BE BROUGHT TO VOTE. REASON IS THAT ARCHBISHOP IERONYMOS WISHES AVOID GIVING HIS OPPONENTS IN GREEK SYNOD PRETEXT FOR ATTACKING HIM FOR HIS SUPPORT OF MAKARIOS.

4. COMMENT: WHILE PRELATES ARE LIKELY EXPLORE PATHS OF ACCOMODATION, WE SEE LITTLE HOPE EITHER SIDE WILL BACK DOWN. IF SYNOD CARRIES OUT THREAT EXCOMMUNICATE BISHOPS, THIS COULD TRIGGER VIOLENCE FROM THEIR GRIVASIST SUPPORTERS.
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